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A FEW ANCIENT SEALS.

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The seals here described are a miscellany, belonging to several different collections. Numbers 2-7 have never before been published, as far as I am aware. In the case of the seals belonging to the collection of the late Mr. Herbert E. Clark, Vice-Consul of the United States in Jerusalem, I am chiefly indebted to my colleague, Professor Clay, for wax impressions made by him in Jerusalem in 1920. The facsimile of one of these seals, that of Elišama', is from an impression sent to me, many years ago, by Dr. H. H. Spoer; and that of No. 6 is from an excellent impression in clay made for me in 1906 by Professor George Sverdrup. All the facsimiles are of the same size as their originals, unless otherwise stated.

1. *An Ammonite Seal.* The seal here published and described contains the only known writing which can be claimed as Ammonite. The seal is already pretty well known, though its true character and importance have not been recognized. It was first published by Professor Morris Jastrow, Jr., in the Periodical *Hebraica* for July, 1891, p. 257, but the inscription was not correctly read by him. Clermont-Ganneau, in the first volume of his *Études d' Archéologie Orientale*, 1895, pp. 85-90, gave the correct reading, and accompanied it with a discussion so full and penetrating as to leave very little to be said. He also provided two facsimile half-tones, but as neither one is sufficiently distinct, it has seemed to me desirable to make a new attempt at a facsimile, as well as to put in a new light certain observations made by the brilliant French scholar.

The seal, formerly the property of the Hon. Mayer Sulzberger, of Philadelphia, was presented by him to Dropsie College in that city, and it is through the great kindness of Dr. Cyrus Adler, the President of the institution, that I have been enabled to make a cast directly from the object itself. It is a scaraboid of a variegated reddish agate; the accompanying illustration is one and one-half times the size of the original.

The principal device on the face of the seal is of a well-known late Assyrian type, a winged demon erect on two clawed feet, with tightly curled tail, and holding a dagger in the left hand. Above, on either side of the head, are a crescent and a small circular disc representing the sun. The figure is executed in masterly style, and the workmanship is excellent in all the details.

The inscription reads as follows: לאדנפלט|עבד עמנרב, "(Seal) of Adonipelet, Servant of Amminadab."

The "עבד" seals seem to have been generally, if not always, the property of royal officers of high rank. The title "Servant," not always designating the same office, is followed either by the word המלך, "the King," or else by the king's name. The matter has been discussed at length by several scholars; see especially Clermont-Ganneau, *Recueil d' Archéologie Orientale* I, 33 ff.; Lidzbarski, *Ephemeris* II, 142 f.; and the *Répertoire d' Épigraphie Sémitique* II, no. 534, with the references there given. In the last-named passage, dealing with the famous "Jeroboam seal," the editor remarks: "L' absence du titre de roi ne permet pas de voir dans ירבעם le roi d' Israël du même nom." I do not see how it is possible to justify this statement. The available space on these little seals is very limited, and no convention could be more natural than the omission of either the name or the title of the king; only one of the two is needed, and the presence of both together would be really surprising.

Clermont-Ganneau, in his discussion of the inscription on this seal, remarked (*ibid.*, p. 89) that Amminadab is known not only as a Hebrew name but also as the name of an Ammonite king who paid tribute to Assyria (according to him, in the time of Esarhaddon), and that therefore the seal might be of Ammonite origin. He laid no weight upon this conjecture, however, but thought it equally possible (*ibid.*) that the seal was Israelite, as Derenbourg had contended. No further attention was paid to this conjecture, as far as I am aware. In the glossary of Lidzbarski's *Handbuch der nordsemitischen Epigraphik*, the אדנפלט of this seal is entered as Phoenician (p. 209) and the עמנרב (p. 343) as Hebrew—apparently an oversight.

The theory of Ammonite origin, however, is something more than a mere conjecture. The Assyrian king to whom "Amminadab, king of Ammon," paid tribute was Ašurbanipal (*Keilinschriftliche Bibliothek* II, 240). We know, therefore, that in his time Assyrian influence was potent in Ammon, especially at court. This was a time when a "servant of Amminadab" would be likely to have an Assyrian device engraved on his seal. Clermont-Ganneau remarks (*ibid.*) that both palaeographically and in the style of Assyrian art the seal might well belong to the 7th century B. C. It is possible to say more than this, however, for it is precisely the art of the time of Ašurbanipal that this demon with the short dagger first suggests.

There is other evidence of some importance, which can be presented here for the first time, namely the peculiar form of two of the characters in the inscription. We may certainly take it for granted that the letters, so

1. Adonipelet

2. Nathaniah

3. Hōnan

4. Sithra

5. Elramaz

6. Seal from Gaza(†)

7. Lydian seal

10. Demaliah

9. Elišamaʿ

11. Ramaʿ

12. Shebaniah



carefully engraved, represent the best standard of their locality. The form of the **𐤅** is very remarkable, I know of no other example with which it could be compared. The limb of the character which is produced upward and bent over at the top is on the right side, not on the left. It is carved with perfect clearness, and it must be said that it is a perfectly natural development of the old Phoenician character, such as might easily become customary in a single locality. The letter is not shown distinctly in the facsimile published by Clermont-Ganneau, who speaks (p. 89) of "*la silhouette confuse présentée par la gravure.*" The form of the letter **ע**, occurring twice, is also very noticeable. It has none of the forms found in Phoenician, Hebrew, Aramaic, or Mesopotamian inscriptions, but it is distinctly square. The only other example known to me is on the seal published in CIS II, 90, a seal of unknown origin, combining Assyrian and Egyptian motives, and dated by the editors in the 7th or 6th century B. C.

On the ground of the facts here presented, each item of the evidence confirming the rest, it seems to me that we are fully justified in pronouncing this seal Ammonite, and in identifying this Amminadab with the king named in the annals of the Assyrian king Ašurbanipal.

2. Scaraboid seal of bluish chalcedony, belonging to the collection of Yale University. Purchased by Professor A. T. Clay from a dealer, who could give no information as to the place where it was found. Hebrew inscription in two lines separated by an ornamental device. **לנתניהו בן בוזי** "(Seal) of Nathaniah ben Būzī." The characters are graceful in form and finely executed. At the end of the first line there is a small floral ornament, and the whole field is enclosed by a double line. The name Buzi occurs in the Old Testament, as the name of the father of the prophet Ezekiel (1:3). The characters are Palestinian, and the date probably the seventh century.

3. A conoidal seal of chalcedony, belonging to Mr. Edward T. Newell, President of the American Numismatic Society. Provenience unknown. Cast made from a wax impression. The inscribed face (the base of the conoid) is octagonal in shape, and the two halves of the inscription are separated by an ornamental device enclosed by two parallel lines. The inscription: **יֵאזַנְיָא בֶן חֲנָנִיָּה**, "(Seal) of Hōnān, son of Ya'azanya." The characters are all distinctly cut, and their forms resemble those found in Aramaic inscriptions of Mesopotamia. The forms of **י** and **נ** are also found in numerous inscriptions of Asia Minor belonging to the fifth century B. C. The form and material of the seal would also suggest the Persian period. The names are Hebrew. **חֲנָנִיָּה** (the reading seems quite certain) can only be an abbreviated name; cf. **כֹּהֲנִיָּהוּ** ? The name Ya'azanya

is well known, both from the Old Testament, where the form is **יְהוֹנָדָה**, and from the Egyptian papyri (ed. Sayce and Cowley), where the form **יְהוֹנָה**, once abbreviated to **יִן**, occurs frequently. The facsimile is one and one-half times the size of the original.

4. A scaraboid seal, also belonging to Mr. Newell, and, like the other, purchased by him from a dealer. Cast made from a wax impression. Inscribed with a single name, between double lines. Winged figures, in Persian style, above and below. **לְסִתְרָה**, "(Seal) of Sithra." Compare the name **סִתְרִי**, Ex. 6: 22, and also the noun **סִתְרָה**, "protection." In the lexicon of Gesenius-Buhl the name Satturu (*Babylonian Expedition of the University of Pennsylvania* 9, 69) is also compared. This seal also would seem to belong to the Persian period, and is probably Mesopotamian and Hebrew.

5. Clark collection. Seal purchased in Jerusalem. Bearded figure in profile, standing before an altar and raising his hands toward a symbol of the deity (a star) before his face. Late Babylonian (Persian) style. Behind the figure the inscription: **לְאֵלְרָמָז**, "(Seal) of Elramaz." I was at first inclined to read **לְאֵלְרָם** (a well known name), and to suppose that the uppermost character was intended for a representation of the crescent moon. This, however, is hardly permissible. The line is perfectly straight, and both its slope and its distance from the **נ** indicate that it is the last letter of the name. Since the verb **רָמַז** is so extensively used in Eastern Aramaic (Syriac) for the divine command, or the expression of the divine will (*nutus dei*), the name would be a natural one. Compare Hebrew **אֲמַרְיָהוּ** and Phoenician **בַּעַלְמִנְגֵּלָא**. Our seal is Aramaic, perhaps of the sixth century. This form of the letter **ז** is frequently found in Mesopotamia thus early.

I have not been able to find that this seal has already been published, though impressions and photographs of it have been familiar to me for ten years or more.

6. Clark collection. Seal said to have been found in the Philistine country (perhaps at Gaza?). Figure of a winged genius bearing in one arm a horned animal (gazelle?) for sacrifice, and holding pendent in the other hand a three-branched flower. In front, a single palm branch. Behind and below, the single letter **נ**. The device is Assyrian in every detail; compare especially the illustration in Perrot and Chipiez, *History of Art in Chaldaea and Assyria*, fig. 29, facing p. 108, from a relief of the time of Ašurbanipal. The letter **נ** reminds us of the coins of Gaza, though this seal certainly belongs to the Assyrian period, and is thus many centuries older than any of these coins.

7. Clark collection. A Lydian seal (perhaps from Sardis?). I have two rather poor impressions, neither of which covers the whole. A horned bovine animal (antelope?) nibbles a leafy branch held by its master. Above is a figure like the old Greek letter *koppa*. The letters of the inscription appear to be TETELIIT, or TETELEIT, but the last two or three can be seen only in part in the two impressions. If this -LEIT could be regarded as equivalent to the ending -LID appended to Lydian proper names with the meaning of a genitive or dative termination (Littmann, *Lydian Inscriptions*, 1916), we might have here the name *Terḡs*, known to Greek epigraphy.

8. *The "Barabbas" Seal*. An ellipsoid of red sard, in the Berlin Museum. One side flat, the other convex, the latter inscribed. First published by Horn and Steindorff, *Sassanidische Siegelsteine*, 1891, Tafel V, no. 1531; a brief description on p. 18. Republished, with a better drawing, by Lidzbarski, *Ephemeris* I, 141 f. I have reproduced his drawing here. See also *Répertoire*, no. 1265.



FIG. 8.

On one side is the name *יהודה*, on the other, *בר אבה*; between these names, above, can be seen four letters. Lidzbarski ventures no conjecture as to these. Schroeder, in the *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina Vereins*, 37 (1914), p. 177, would read *הכס*. This would hardly do, however, even if anything resembling כ or ס could be seen in the facsimiles. Clermont-Ganneau, in the *Répertoire*, suggests *הלוי*. This would be a plausible filling of the gap (supposing the inscription to be Hebrew rather than Aramaic), but here again the reading does not seem to be justified by the two drawings before us. The two characters at the right are sufficiently distinct, while the two at the left are very uncertain, as may easily be seen by comparing the two facsimiles. The first letter of the word is certainly ח; the second, with the top bent over and the short base-line, is almost certainly ז; compare the form of this letter in No. 3, above, and especially the table in Chwolson's *Corpus Inscriptionum Hebraicarum*, among the forms described as Babylonian, of the first few centuries A. D. I would suggest the reading *חזנה*, i. e. *חַזְנָה*, supposing this Judah to have been the "Overseer" of a synagogue. The title *Hazzān* (Chazan) is very ancient, as is well known; indeed, the word was Babylonian-Assyrian before it was adopted by the Jews. The נ is readily suggested by the facsimile, and in Lidzbarski's drawing of the remaining character two

upright shafts can be seen. The whole inscription would then read: **יהודה חזנה בר אבא**, "Judah the Ḥazzān, son of Abba."

Since several of the most important seals in the Clark collection have not yet been published in facsimile, though their inscriptions have repeatedly been published and discussed, I have thought that it may be useful to show here photographs of casts made from impressions, even though the latter are not as satisfactory as could be wished.

The first (Fig. 9) is the seal of "Elišama^c, son of the King," first published by Sayce, then by Clermont-Ganneau, afterwards again by Sayce; see the *Répertoire*, no. 1272 (the vol. of the P. E. F. Q. referred to should be the year 1909, not 1902). A short vertical line is used to separate the words of the inscription, a feature quite uncommon in seals. In spite of the arguments of Clermont-Ganneau, *Académie des Inscriptions, Comptes Rendus*, 1892, pp. 277 f.; *Recueil d' Archéologie Orientale*, I, p. 36; I am not persuaded that the Hebrew word **בן** in the phrase **בן המלך** ever has any other than its ordinary signification.

The second seal (Fig. 10) is that of "Demalyāhū, son of Nēriyāhū," published by the same scholars as the preceding. The name is ordinarily read "Remalyāhū," since it is obviously identical with the familiar Biblical name (Remaliah). There can be no question, however, that our seal gives the initial letter as **ד**, not **ר**. Clermont-Ganneau has shown (*Comptes Rendus*, *ibid.*, 279 ff.) that the same reading is found on another, very similar, ancient Hebrew seal in the Berlin Museum. This being the case, we probably should correct the reading in the Old Testament, as Clermont-Ganneau has suggested; since on the one hand, it is not strange that Massoretic text and LXX should agree in a misreading of this nature at a time when **ד** and **ר** were identical in form; while on the other hand, in the Hebrew epigraphy of this early period and style the two letters are not confused.

The third seal (Fig. 11) is that of "Rama," published by Clermont-Ganneau (*loc. cit.*), and by Pilcher in the *P. E. F. Quarterly Statement*, 1913, pp. 145 f. The latter gives a facsimile, but one in which the inscription is entirely invisible. The characters are Palestinian, of the best period.

The fourth seal (Fig. 12) is that of "Šebanyāhū (Shebaniah), published by Pilcher (*loc. cit.*), with a facsimile which is not sufficiently distinct. My own photograph, which is one and one-half times the size of the original, is also unsatisfactory, but may serve to supplement the other. The seal is an interesting specimen of old Hebrew art. The palmette is of a type which is very familiar in Phoenician sculpture. I am quite unable to agree with Mr. Pilcher in supposing that the Hebrew characters (gracefully drawn and not inartistically distributed) were added later, or that the seal shows Greek influence.